

Message Text

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ACTION EA-12

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01
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R 171131Z JUL 78
FM AMEMBASSY CONAKRY
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4540
INFO AMEMBASSY BAMAKO
AMEMBASSY BRAZZAVILLE
AMEMBASSY DAKAR
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
USLO PEKING

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 CONAKRY 1348

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PEPR, GV,CH
SUBJECT: DINNER WITH CHINESE AMBASSADOR AT LATTER'S INVITATION

REF: (A) CONAKRY 0594 (B) CONAKRY 1291

1. AMBASSADOR AND POLITICAL OFFICER WERE INVITED BY CHINESE AMBASSADOR FOR DINNER ON JULY 6. AMERICANS WERE SOLE GUESTS, AS CHINESE ARE NOT AUTHORIZED TO INVITE OR BE INVITED BY US EXCEPT ON A BILATERAL BASIS. CHINESE DCM AND ONE INTERPRETER ROUNDED OUT THE OTHER SIDE. THIS DINNER WAS IN RECIPROCATON FOR DINNER HATED BY DCM DURING AMBASSADOR'S ABSENCE (REF A) JUST PRIOR TO AMBASSADOR PENG'S DEPARTURE ON HOMELEAVE IN APRIL.

2. AMBASSADOR PENG, IN SOMEWHAT PREDICTABLE FASHION, DWELLED AT LENGTH ON EXPANSIONIST SOVIET POLICY IN AFRICA AND INDO-CHINA. PENG MINIMIZED CAPACITY OF CHINESE TO STEM SOVIET HEGEMONISTIC TENDENCIES IN THESE TWO AREAS OF THE WORLD, AND PUT PRINCIPAL RESPONSIBILITY FOR DOING

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SO SQUARELY ON WASHINGTON'S SHOULDERS. HE APPROVED THE FRENCH AND BELGIAN MILITARY ACTION IN ZAIRE AND WOULD NOT CONCEDE THAT THE MAJORITY OF AFRICAN STATES OPPOSE THAT SORT OF INTERVENTION. PENG NOTED THAT CHINESE VICE-PREMIER AND POLITIBUREAU MEMBER KENG PIAO WOULD BE VISITING GUINEA 913 OCTOBER. (PER REF B, EMBASSY WAS ALREADY AWARE OF PIAO VISIT, AS WELL AS PRESIDENT TOURE'S

ANNOUNCED INTENTION TO VISIT CHINA.) ALTHOUGH HEDGING SOMEWHAT ON EXACTLY WHERE INITIATIVE FOR VISIT CAME FROM, PENG SAID HE "INFORMED" GOG OF RENG TRAVEL, THUS MORE OR LESS VERIFYING EARLIER EMBASSY INFORMATION THAT IT WAS THE CHINESE WHO HAD ASKED FOR VISIT. PENG CLAIMED TO HAVE NO IDEA WHEN PRESIDENT TOURE WOULD VISIT CHINA OR WHETHER VISIT WOULD PRECEDE OR FOLLOW THAT OF KENG PIAO TO CONAKRY. PENG DESCRIBED KENG PIAO VISIT AS AN TTTEMPT TO RESUSCIATATE GUINEAN-QHINESE RELATIONS, WHICH HAVE BEEN IN DOLDRUMS SINCE 9175. HE SAID PRINCIPAL CHINESE GOAL IS TO ENCOURAGE GUINEAN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND GENUINE POLITICAL INDEPENDENCE, FREE OF DOMINATION BY SOVITS OR ANYONE. HE STATED THAT CHINESE WOULD PROBABLY OFFER ADDITIONAL DEVELOPMENTAL AID IN FORM OF AGRICULTURAL (MAINLY RICE) PRODUCTION AND "LIGHT INDUSTRY". HE SAID HE DID NOT KNOW WHETHER ANY MILITARY ASSISTANCE WOULD BE OFFERED. IN DISCUSSING KENG PIAO'S AFRICAN ITINERARY, AMBASSADOR PENG STATED THAT KENG WOULD COME TO CONAKRY

FROM BRAZZAVILLE, THEN GO ON TO BAMAKO, PRESUMABLY ARRIVING THERE 13 OR 14 OCTOBER, IF ORIGINAL SCHEDULING HOLD. IN REFERENCE TO EARLIER KENG PIAO VISIT TO PAKISTAN, PENG SAID IT WAS LINKED TO COUP IN AFGHANISTAN. IMPLICATION WAS CLEAR THAT KENG PIAO VISIT TO ISLAMABAD WAS ATTEMPT AT CONSOLIDATION OF CHINA-PAKISTAN TIES IN VIEW PRO-SOVIET ORIENTATION OF KABUL
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GOVERNMENT.

3. IN DISCUSSING VIETNAMESE-CAMBODIAN CONFLICT, PENG REITERATED THAT HISTORICAL TENSION BETWEEN VIETNAMESE AND KHMERS WERE OBVIOUSLY PART OT THE PROBLEM BUT DID NOT HESITATE TO LAY BLAME ON SOVIETS FOR FANNING THE FLAMES AS DIRECT RESULT OF USSR'S STRATEGY TO ACHIEVE HEGEMONY IN INDOCHINA. IN SOMTHING OF AN UNRELATED ASISDE, AMBASADOR PENG STATED THAT VIETNAMESE HAD PLACED UNSPECIFIED, FORMERLY SOUTH VIETNAMESE PORT FACILITY WHICH HAD BEEN "CONSTRUCTED BY THE AMERICANS DURING THE (VIETNAMESE) WAR" AT THE DISPOSITION OF THE SOVIETS. HE SAID RUSSIANS CONTINUE THEIR TRAAITIONAL EFFORTS TO SECURE WARM WATER PORTS. PROBED ON CHINESE FEARS OF OUTBREANOF ARMED CONFLICT BETWEEN CHINA AND VIETNAM, PENG SAID THE PROBLEMS BETWEEN THEM WERE NOT THAT SERIOUS AND ADDED THAT CHINA WOULD NEVER BE THE FIRST TO INITIATE HOSTILITIES. ASKED IF CHINA HAD TAKEN ANY ACTION TO IMPEDE THE MOVE-MENT OF GOODS OR MATERIAL TO VIETNAM FROM USSR VIA CHINESE RAILWAY, HE RESPONDED THAT THE RAILWAY HAD BEEN "CLOSED TO THE USSR SINCE THE END OF THE (VIETNAM) WAR."

4. PENG'S ASSESSMENT OF INTERNAL CONDITIONS IN CHINA
AS RESULT HIS HOMELEAVE WAS EMPHATICALLY POSITIVE,
EXPRESSING PARTICULAR OPTIMISM VIS-A-VIS THE 1978 AGRI-
CULTURAL OUTLOOK. HE SINGLED OUT SZECHWAN PROVINCE JU
A HEAVY PRODUCER OF WHEAT AND SAID THAT THIS YEAR'S
CROPS LOOKED PROMISING. HE STATED THAT VESTIGIAL PROBLEMS
STEMMING FROM THE "GANG OF 4" WERE NOW LIMITED TO ONLY
"ONE OR TWO PROVINCES" BUT DID NOT IDENTIFY THEM.

5. PENG STATED THAT CHINA WAS DETERMINED TO HELP THE
MOBUTU GOVERNMENT AND THAT SOME MILITARY AID WOULD PRO-
BABLY BE FURNISHED. HE ASKED HOW THE US SAW THE PROBLEM
AND WHAT WE EXPECTED TO TRY AND DO ABOUT IT. AMBASSADOR
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RESPONDED THAT A COMBINATION OF ECONOMIC AID AND
ENCOURAGEMENT FOR SUBSTANTIAL INTERNAL POLITICAL REFORMS WOULD FORM
THE ESSENTIALS OF THE US APPROACH. PENG REXPECTED CHINESE
GOVERNMENT'S PERCEPTION OF SHABA PROBLEM IN MORE SIMPLISTIC
TERMS, STRESSING THE NEED TO COUNTER SOVIET-CUBAN
PATRONAGE OF THE KATANGAN REBELS.
CROSBY

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PAGE 01 CONAKR 01348 02 OF 02 181007Z
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 CONAKRY 1348

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6. PENG AMPLY REFLECTED CHINESE ESTIMATE THAT SOVIETS WERE SEEKING WAYS TO REPAIR THEIR POSITION IN GUINEA FOLLOWING THE SETBACKS OF THE PAST YEAR AND WAS INTERESTED IN OBTAINING US ESTIMATES OF HOW THEY MIGHT BE EXPECTED TO GO ABOUT THIS. AMBASSADOR RESPONDED THAT SOVIET ANSWER TO WOOING OF FOREIGN CLIENTS WAS CONSISTENTLY BASED MORE ON MILITARY AID AND SALES PROGRAMS THAN ON THE CREATION OF DURABLE ECONOMIC INFRASTRUCTURE AND THAT THERE WERE INDICATIONS THAT THIS POLICY WOULD CONTINUE TO BE PURSUED HERE. PENG NOTED THAT GUINEAN ARMY MINISTER KOUROUMA IS NOT IN THE POLITBURO AND IS NOT VERY HIGH RANKING.

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7. CURIOUSLY, PENG ASKED WHAT AMERICAN ESTIMATE WAS OF LIKELIHOOD THAT SOVIETS MIGHT SPONSOR A COUP IN GUINEA TO REVERSE THE PRESENT TREND TO MODERATION AND MORE BALANCED TIES TO THE WEST. AMBASSADOR REPLIED THAT HE CONSIDERED POSSIBILITY EXTREMELY REMOTE. CHINESE DIPLOMATS THEN PROBED AMERICAN KNOWLEDGE OF CUBAN MILITARY ACTIVITIES IN GUINEA, VOLUNTEERING NO INFORMATION OF THEIR OWN.

8. CHINESE ALSO APPEARED TO BE UNUSUALLY INTERESTED IN FUTURE OF SOVIET PETROLEUM DELIVERIES TO GUINEA AND WHAT AMERICANS WOULD DO TO STEP INTO THE LURCH SHOULD SOVIETS CUT OFF PROVISION OF FUTURE GASOLINE AND PETROLEUM PRODUCTS.

9. COMMENT: CONSISTENT WITH LAST ENCOUNTER AS WELL AS WITH EARLIER SESSIONS OF LESS STRUCTURED NATURE THAT EMBASSY OFFICERS HAVE HAD WITH CHINESE ON NEUTRAL GROUNDS, CHINESE DID LITTLE TALKING EXCEPT TO ASK QUESTIONS. ATMOSPHERE WAS OF COURSE EXCEPTIONALLY CORDIAL AND SEVEN-COURSE DINNER WAS PUNCTUATED WITH REPEATED TOASTS TO EVERYONE'S HEALTH WITH CHINESE RICE-SORGHUM LIQUEUR AND AMPLE QUANTITIES OF SWEET WINE. NOT UNUSUALLY, AMERICAN-CHINESE RELATIONS WERE NOT MENTIONED, EXCEPT IN BRIEF ASIDE BY CHINESE DCM TO POLITICAL OFFICER; CHINESE DCM EXPRESSED HOPE THAT THERE WOULD SOON BE

MOVEMENT ON TAIWAN ISSUE SO THAT NORMALIZATION OF RELATIONS
COULD PROCEED APACE. AMBASSADOR PENG AT OUTSET OF
DINNER EXPRESSED DESIRE OF GETTING TOGETHER IN THE
FUTURE AND ALTHOUGH HE DID NOT SUGGEST SPECIFICALLY THAT
FUTURE SESSIONS SHOULD BE ON A REGULAR BASIS, ONE HAD THAT
IMPRESSION THAT HE WAS DRIVING MORE OR LESS IN THAT
DIRECTION. AMBASSADOR PENG PROBABLY PREFERS TO KEEP THESE
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ENCOUNTERS INFREQUENT, THOUGH, AND LIMITED TO HIMSELF,
HIS INTERPRETER AND HIS DCM. HE HAS SHOWN FLEXIBILITY,
HOWEVER. AT THE COURTESY CALL WHICH AMBASSADOR PAID ON
PENG IN DECEMBER, PENG STATED THAT IT WAS HIS INTENTION
TO RESTRICT SUBSEQUENT ENCOUNTERS TO THE CHIEF OF MISSION
LEVEL. THE INCREASED PARTICIPATION OF OTHER EMBASSY
OFFICERS SINCE THEN PROBABLY REFLECTS PEKING'S
GREATER INTEREST IN SUCH PERIODIC SESSIONS WITH
AMERICANS. END COMMENT.
CROUBY

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